

Ad Hoc Committee for Inter-district Education Cost Sharing
Programming Sub-Committee
Regular Meeting

December 1, 2021

7PM

Call to Order: Chairman Bisson called the Meeting to order at 7:05PM.

Roll Call: Rose Bisson, Kathy Donahue, Wendy Sears, Juan Arriola, Angela Maschka, Juan Arriola, Cassidy Martin

Additions to the Agenda: none

General Discussion

Chairman Bisson reviewed the information to be provided on the committee's website which includes certified staff negotiated contracts, contracts of superintendents and other administrative personnel, the school principals and the school nurses, and the pay scales of paraprofessionals. Chairman Bisson stressed the need to exclude specific names of staff; Kathy Donahue stated that the website would include only contracts, and the spread sheet developed to provide the costs of staff in a combined school would list positions only, for example certified special and classroom teachers and non-certified staff. She also stated that in developing this financial information she would need the contracted salary steps in order to estimate the costs, and that she was calculating salary averages and median salaries, which are influenced less with outliers that can skew the results. Though Wendy Sears stated that the highest salaries should be reflected so that the most expensive potential is presented to the public, Ms. Donahue countered that the median reflects the norm. Ms. Sears also corrected the Scotland music teacher's FTE and salary, which is actually a .6 position at a salary of \$29,994.

There was discussion on presenting the positions that are currently funded with grants received due to Covid, some of which are temporarily increased; it was suggested that what remains after the grants are eliminated, in terms of the positions and the costs, needs to be considered. There was also discussion on the potential of having full or part time staff in a combined school, rather than contracted services for certain positions, such as Speech and Language and a school psychologist. This might prove more cost effective than contracting the services.

Kathy Donahue suggested that the salaries for the current and the following year, per the contracts, be included in the financial presentation. Cassidy Martin noted that the Scotland teachers' contract has been negotiated and needs to be ratified by the teachers' union and the school board. Ms. Donahue suggested that benefits also be included, such as stipends for retiring teachers and the cost of health insurance. There was discussion on estimating the costs associated with insurance coverage. Wendy Sears stated that the estimates should assume that all eligible staff will use the health insurance offered by the school and questioned whether the estimates should reflect individual or family coverage, or both. Cassidy Martin noted that few teachers in Scotland depend on the school's insurance. Chairman Bisson did not have a number for Hampton's recipients, but noted that the importance of the subject of insurance during negotiations might indicate the level of enrollment. It was decided that more information is needed regarding health insurance, in terms of the number of teachers currently enrolled, and the type of coverage, individual or family. Kathy Donahue suggested that the committee review historical information to determine the potential percentage increase for next year, and Chairman Bisson noted that the school's insurance consultant could offer an estimate.

There was discussion regarding the school buildings' capacities. Chairman Bisson suggested that the Hampton Elementary School's architect's plans be used to determine capacities; Kathy Donahue said she could provide the architect's plans, noting that walls in some rooms were recently removed to enlarge classrooms when grades were combined. Wendy Sears stated that the information provided on Scotland Elementary School's building capacities derived from the original plan. It was agreed that the criteria used in the two schools in terms of space per student needed to be compared.

There was also discussion on the development and presentation of a potential budget in a combined school. Kathy Donahue noted that the budgets should be presented in excel format, providing columns for Scotland, for Hampton, and for a combined school. Chairman Bisson noted that the financial information for the combined school would reflect the staffing needs, rather than the staff currently employed.

By general consent, the Minutes of the November 8 Special Meeting were approved as presented. It was also agreed to add "Approval of Minutes" as an Agenda item, after "Additions to the Agenda" for future meetings. After discussion on availability for the scheduled meeting of December 15, it was agreed that, if need be, the meeting would be re-scheduled for January 5, 2022.

Audience for Citizens: none.

There being no further business, the special meeting adjourned at 8:06.

Respectfully submitted,

Dayna McDermott Arriola